

Polaris, non-aligned assail U.N. plan

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.N.'s criteria for Saharan voter eligibility to determine the future of Western Sahara drew strident criticism Monday from the Polaris nationalist movement and non-aligned nations. The Security Council examined Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar's latest report on the process, which proposed several wide loopholes for voter eligibility that the occupying power, Morocco, could hypothetically exploit. Morocco annexed Western Sahara in 1975 after Spain gave it up, but had to fight a war with the Polaris Front, which wants independence for the territory. Mr. Perez de Cuellar's report would give voting rights to the child of a Saharan father born in the territory. It is now at least 18 years old, and would let other persons vote if they could show they had been residents of the territory prior to 1974. Polaris, the Organisation of African Unity — which recognises Polaris — and many members of the Non-Aligned Movement fear these criteria are too loose, and say the United Nations should rely strictly on the last census, conducted by Spain in 1974.

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Bomb targets bus carrying Jewish emigres

BUDAPEST (AP) — A bomb exploded outside a bus carrying Soviet Jews emigrating to Israel was attacked at Budapest airport Monday, injuring two policemen and four passengers, the state news agency MTI reported. The bomb, apparently set off by remote control, wrecked a police car accompanying the bus, MTI said, quoting Interior Minister Ferenc Boros. The attack occurred at 9:40 a.m. (0840 GMT), MTI said, giving no further details. Jews emigrating from Soviet republics to Israel have used Budapest as a transit point for more than a year. Monday's reported attack was the first wave of attacks on the Jews since the re-opening of Eastern European ties with Israel in the past two years allowed Soviet Jews to emigrate directly or through Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. They previously passed through the Austrian capital of Vienna.

Arafat in Alma Ata

MOSCOW (AP) — Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat arrived in the Kazakhstan capital of Alma Ata Monday, TASS reported. The Soviet news agency said Mr. Arafat's visit is part of his tour of Asian countries that includes China, Vietnam and Laos. TASS said Mr. Arafat was scheduled to meet Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev. It gave no other details of his visit.

German air crash toll rises to 28

HEIDELBERG, Germany (AP) — Police Monday revised the death toll from the crash of a DC-3 plane, saying 28 people died. Authorities had said 27 people died in the crash Sunday near Heidelberg but the toll was increased when it was discovered there were more people aboard the plane than originally thought. There were four survivors. Authorities were investigating the cause of the crash. The plane was operated by Classic Wings, a company which provides "nostalgia" flights to aviation buffs.

Turkish troops kill 11 rebel Kurds

ANKARA (R) — Turkish troops killed 11 separatist Kurdish rebels in a series of clashes in southeastern Turkey, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said Monday. It said the clashes with the guerrillas of the outlawed Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) took place in a mountainous area between Solla town in Bingol and Kulp town in Diyarbakir province during an operation which began on Saturday. Rebel sources said the 11 were killed when Turkish fighter planes bombed a guerrilla camp in the region on Saturday. More than 3,300 people have been killed since mid-1984 when the PKK launched a campaign for an independent Kurdish state in southeast Turkey.

Egyptian held with stolen antiquities

CAIRO (R) — A jeweller from Alexandria has been arrested on charges of possessing 3,158 stolen antiquities dating from the Pharaonic, Roman, and Islamic periods, security sources said Monday. They said the pieces, including statues, heads of statues, gold and silver amulets, textiles and stone weapons, appeared on records at the Egyptian Organisation of Antiquities and had been stolen from various places around the country.

Sudan, Ethiopia need 1.5m tonnes of food

NAIROBI (AP) — Ethiopia and Sudan will need more than 1.5 million tonnes of food aid in 1992 despite above average harvests this year, a U.N. agency said Monday. The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said 6.1 million drought victims, displaced people and demobilised soldiers and their families in Ethiopia will need 880,000 tonnes of emergency food. In Sudan, the agency said, 662,000 tonnes of food will be needed to help feed 7.1 million victims of drought, war and natural calamities. The FAO forecast 1991-92 production of major cereals in Sudan at 3.8 million tonnes, 1.8 million tonnes more than in 1990-91. But it said 27 per cent of the population will still require help.

Aid flight turned back from Mogadishu

NAIROBI (AP) — A Belgian air force transport plane carrying emergency aid to Somalia's embattled capital was forced to turn back Monday by fighting around the airport, aid officials said. Saleh Dabbakeh of the United Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Nairobi described Monday's fighting in Mogadishu as the heaviest since November. "It is very intense with heavy shelling," he said, adding that forces loyal to President Ali Mahdi Mohammad were apparently trying to recapture the airport from troops of General Mohammed Farrah Aideed, chairman of the ruling United Somali Congress Party.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردن تايمز يومية سياسية صدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Palestinians press U.S. to act to avoid impasse

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinian peace negotiators pressed the United States Monday to step in and break the Middle East peace deadlock at the next round of Arab-Israeli negotiations in Washington.

"Although we feel that the American position practically serves the Israeli objectives, we believe that it is not too late for the U.S. to take a stand which would preserve the peace process," said Faisal Al Hussein, overall head of the Palestinian delegation.

Their negotiations never left the corridors of the U.S. State Department.

"Attempting to neutralise the role of the co-sponsors is a violation of the agreement and is also a way in which the process turned into a biased approach in favour of Israel," delegation spokesman Hanan Ashrawi said.

The peace talks, jointly sponsored by Washington and Moscow, were launched on Oct. 30 with a formal opening ceremony followed by brief bilateral talks in Madrid.

The talks resumed in Washington but were adjourned last week after six days. Israel refused to accept the independent negotiating status of the Palestinians.

But all parties have agreed to

return to Washington for a new round of talks opening on Jan. 7.

Israel had insisted that Palestinians and Jordanians take part as a joint delegation in talks on an interim period of self-rule for nearly two million Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

Palestinians, referring to an agreement with the United States, insisted they alone were entitled to talk with Israel about Palestinian issues while Jordan would discuss demarcation of their common border.

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Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy told a parliamentary committee Monday he had proposed a compromise to the United States over the impasse on who would participate in talks on interim self-rule for Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Sources in the powerful foreign affairs and defence committee said Mr. Levy had proposed that all parties to the talks accept the

principle of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which will later divide into committees.

Mr. Levy told parliament members that each committee will discuss issues relevant to it, the sources said.

The Palestinian negotiators crossed from Jordan to the occupied West Bank on Sunday. They described their talks with the Israelis as "exploratory meetings" and denied that they had reached positive identification.

Delegates accused Israel of trying to torpedo peace talks by stalling during the Washington talks and by stepping up Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir fired what commentators called the opening shots in the 1992 election campaign at a Likud meeting with a vehement attack on left-wing opponents who advocate giving back occupied territories in return for peace with the Arabs.

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But a vote on a separate party issue demonstrated that Foreign Minister David Levy, the leading moderate in Mr. Shamir's cabinet on Arab-Israeli peace moves, commands hefty support in the Likud.

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He suffered a humiliation last October when Mr. Shamir decided to lead the Israeli delegation to the Madrid peace conference, effectively sidelining Mr. Levy.

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Shamir and Levy flex their muscles in Likud

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prepared.

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The committee meeting was closely watched here as a guideline to the balance of forces in Likud. Israeli newspapers interpreted the results to mean Mr. Shamir, by defeating the electoral reform, remains firmly in command, but that Mr. Levy can also claim a power base.

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Freij rejects call for strike

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — An angry Mayor Elias Freij called Monday for residents of Bethlehem and neighbouring Christian towns to ignore a Christmas Eve strike called by local Palestinian activists.

Bethlehem and its Church of the Nativity are the focal points of annual celebrations commemorating the birth of Christ.

Mr. Freij, a Christian who was a Palestinian delegate at peace talks in Madrid and Washington, issued his appeal after a leaflet signed by "the National Forces in Bethlehem" was circulated in the town.

The pamphlet called for shops and offices to close on Dec. 24, Christmas Eve, for Latin Rite churches, and Jan. 6 when Orthodox Churches celebrate Christmas.

It cited the suffering of Palestinians "from the oppression of Israeli military occupation" and "the pain and suffering of Iraqi children" following the Gulf war.

The pamphlet, apparently from Bethlehem activists, contradicted calls by leaders of the Palestinian uprising and the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas movement for shops and restaurants to stay open on Christmas Eve.

Mr. Freij told Israel Radio that

(Continued on page 5)

He was sentenced to death for crimes against humanity and crimes against the Jewish people. He appealed his sentence to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Mr. Demjanjuk insists he was victim of mistaken identity and was at a prison of war camp elsewhere in Poland during the period in question.

Mr. Sheftel says evidence taken from other Treblinka guards by Soviet authorities during the 1940s through 1960s shows up the claim.

He submitted the evidence in August and alleged that prosecutors had access to the material as far back as 1978 but concealed it.

Prosecutor Michael Shaked denied Mr. Sheftel's accusation, and the justices accused the defense lawyer of over dramatising the 71-year-old Demjanjuk's appeal.

Mr. Demjanjuk, looking fit, in brown slacks and a sweater, smiled as he entered the court, his hands handcuffed in front. He told reporters "I feel good today" and was then silent during the session.

Five justices heard Mr. Sheftel's account of new evidence he submitted in August, which he said U.S. officials and prosecutors had hidden from the defense since 1978.

Mr. Sheftel says the testimony from more than 20 Ukrainian guards at the Treblinka camp in Nazi-occupied Poland shows the notorious "Ivan the Terrible" was not Mr. Demjanjuk but someone named Ivan Marchenko.

Mr. Demjanjuk, a retired auto worker from the Seven Hills suburb of Cleveland, Ohio, was convicted in April 1988 of being the guard Ivan the Terrible at Treblinka, where 850,000 people perished in 1942-1943.

Controversy over the case led

Theodor Herzl, an Austrian Jew, to found Zionism, the ideology that led to the creation of Israel.

(Continued on page 5)

Beirut body identified as Higgins'

BEIRUT (AP) — U.S. and U.N. officials positively identified the body of slain American hostage William R. Higgins Monday, the director of the American University Hospital (AUH) said.

The body, in a casket draped with the U.S. flag, was immediately driven out of the hospital's morgue in an ambulance escorted by two U.S. embassy cars. The convoy sped away in the direction of the embassy in the Beirut suburb of Askar.

Hospital director Dr. Faisal Nasjar said: "U.N. and U.S. officials who examined the body after coroner general Dr. Ahmad Harati performed a second examination of the corpse had reached positive identification."

Among the U.N. officers who helped in the investigation were soldiers who knew Lieutenant-Colonel Higgins because they had been "wrapped in cotton and bandages" in an attempt to preserve it. "From what I've seen of the neck, it looks like there was an attempt to embalm the body, but it was poorly done," he added.

An AP reporter allowed into the

morgue briefly Sunday saw the body of the fair-skinned man lying in drawer No. 3, covered with a white sheet.

Much of the light hair was still in a crew cut. The facial features appeared to be those of a Westerner.

There were black stains around the neck, and a morgue attendant said these were blood stains.

Col. Higgins was kidnapped Feb. 17, 1988 near Tyre, 80 kilometres south of Beirut. He headed the U.N. Truce Supervisory Organisation, a UN observer force that monitors the Lebanon-Israeli border.

The return of Col. Higgins' body was another successful step in the hostage negotiations of the Soviet Union.

The body was found by a police patrol lying in a street in south Beirut, wrapped in a beige and blue wool blanket. The anonymous caller, Mr. Khathib said, told police that the body was dumped in Ruew street. The caller then hung up.

Dr. Harati, the coroner general, said the body had been "wrapped in cotton and bandages" in an attempt to preserve it. "From what I've seen of the neck, it looks like there was an attempt to embalm the body, but it was poorly done," he added.

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(Continued on page 5)

Iraqi families face bleak

Christmas under sanctions

BAGHDAD (R) — "Anything" says 12-year-old Zafaran when asked what he wants for Christmas.

Zafaran and his family live in the teeming, mainly Christian working-class neighbourhood of Battawine, which was once one of Baghdad's most exclusive areas. Unofficial sources estimate that about 700,000 of Iraq's 18 million people are Christians.

Algeria poised between ideals of Islamic state and Democracy

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria Monday wound up an electoral campaign many thought would never take place, its leaders urging the 25 million people to secure democracy as a way of life at general elections on Thursday.

At stake in the country's first free general election appears the choice between a fundamentalist Islamic state or a multi-party parliament driving a liberal society with a free-market economy.

It is a poll where cabinet members and Prime Minister Sidahmed Ghazali are not seeking seats although some diplomats suggest Mr. Ghazali could be at least temporarily recalled by the president if no party emerged clear winner.

Local rather than party loyalties in small communities could also dictate the outcome.

Calling for a massive turnout, the cabinet said after a weekend meeting: "If Algerian men and women vote, Algeria will be the main winner, an Algeria of democracy and liberties."

Scheduled for June, the election was put off after militants of the Islamic Action Front (FIS), the main opposition party, clashed with security forces and 55 people died.

The FIS demands a state ruled by Islamic law. Its militants demanded it there and then, without a vote.

Thursday's vote is across a country more than four times the size of France, its ex-colonial ruler across the Mediterranean.

Likud votes against reform in elections

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud bloc early Monday overwhelmingly rejected an electoral reform proposal that would lead to direct election of the premier.

The vote by central committee of the right-wing Likud was seen as a victory for the 76-year-old leader, who appealed to delegates to oppose the bill.

It was not clear if the Likud legislators would be bound by their central committee's vote when the electoral reform plan comes before the Knesset, or parliament, a key question for success of the plan.

Mr. Shamir had argued the reform proposal would not improve the government but would lessen chances of Likud's returning to power in elections scheduled next November.

Several potential challengers to Mr. Shamir's leadership of the right-wing party, including Housing Minister Ariel Sharon and Foreign Minister David Levy, supported the move to elect the prime minister in a direct, public vote.

Recent polls have shown that Mr. Shamir would beat Labour Party leader Shimon Peres in such an election. But Mr. Peres is being challenged by former De-

fenster Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and polls indicate Mr. Shamir would lose to Mr. Rabin.

Under Israel's present election system, the head of the party capable of forming a coalition is named prime minister.

A grassroots electoral reform movement sprang up in Israel following much publicised offers of political jobs and funds for small, religious parties to join a coalition government after indecisive 1990 elections.

The Likud central committee rejected the electoral reform bill by 74 per cent to 26 per cent early Monday after a more than 10-hour meeting in Tel Aviv, the daily *Yedioth Achronot* reported.

The question of imposing Likud Party discipline against electoral reform is likely to be the decisive factor in whether a bill passes the Knesset.

Likud has 37 of the 120 parliamentary seats and the backing of at least a dozen members from nationalist and religious parties. Labour, which has 38 seats, already has instructed its members of vote for reform.

"Every representative of the Likud in the Knesset will certainly have to weigh very hard the decision accepted by the majority

Fifty-seven women are standing. Few will forecast the poll outcome. Western diplomats see the FIS probably emerging as the biggest party but without an overall majority.

The FLN is seen as a solid runner-up, with the Socialist Forces Front, led by veteran independence fighter Hocine Ait Ahmad, as a likely third force, followed by a few others.

Mr. Ghazali, appointed to get elections back on track, and asked for his forecast recently, said: "I don't know. It seems to me that no one can suggest a score. But I am sure that no party will gain a majority of 51 per cent."

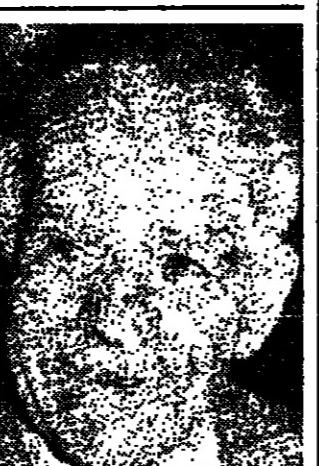
Cabinet members are not standing for election, although President Benjedid is not bound to select a new prime minister from any particular party.

The FIS which has shown itself well organised was holding a final mass rally in Algiers in the July 5 stadium it usually fills with bussed-in supporters.

Some other leaders have complained of their meetings being disrupted by bearded militants, and newspapers reported the appearance of forged ballot papers in one area, with a cross by FIS candidate's name.

The government has promised "fair and clean" elections, backed itself with tough new laws to control any unrest, and says its security measures will ensure the vote goes smoothly.

The 13.3 million electors have a choice of 5,712 candidates, including some 1,000 independents.



Yitzhak Shamir

in the central committee and act accordingly," Police Minister Roni Milo, a Shamir ally, said after the vote.

Israel's next national elections are scheduled Nov. 3, 1992. But the vote could be held sooner if Mr. Shamir's cabinet collapses amid division over the Middle East peace process or a dispute over allocation of government funds to religious institutions.

The far-right Tzomet Party, a member of Mr. Shamir's coalition with two parliamentary seats, said Monday it may pull out of government if Likud legislators are not allowed to vote according to their conscience.

The move would not topple Mr. Shamir's coalition, which has the backing of 66 Knesset members.

Sudan, Ethiopia get together on refugees

KHARTOUM (AP) — Governments of the Horn of Africa are being summoned to discuss the care and welfare of two million refugees in the region, a Sudanese official said Monday.

The conference's co-sponsors, Sudan and Ethiopia, face similar hardships, wretched poverty in their own right and a mandate from the world to give a decent life to hundreds of thousands of outsiders.

Osman Al Sayed, Sudan's ambassador to Ethiopia, said Somalia, Djibouti, Kenya and the interim government of Eritrea are being invited to the conference. International relief organisations from the United Na-

tions and elsewhere as well as Western donors also are being invited he said.

Mr. Sayed said the conference will be in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa in late January or early February. He said the aim is to "work out a long-term plan for resolving problems of refugees and displacement in the region."

Sudan and Ethiopia agreed to organise the conference at meetings of government ministers held in Khartoum.

There are about two million refugees in the Horn of Africa. Civil war and famine have displaced some in their own countries or to flee to neighbouring states. Most are Ethiopian,

Somali or Sudanese. Sudan has been hosting about 850,000 Ethiopians for years. Last spring, the overthrow of Mengistu Haile Mariam's government in Addis Ababa sent another 30,000-60,000, mostly Ethiopian army soldiers, flooding into eastern Sudan. Most of the former soldiers have been voluntarily repatriated to Ethiopia by the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Tamrat Layne, Ethiopia's prime minister, appeared on Sudanese state television Sunday night to urge all Ethiopians in Sudan to return home, "for participation in national reconstruction."

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 63 per cent, Aqaba 37 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Khalid Ma'addi 743500

Dr. Khalil Abd 795392

Dr. Abdellah Al Hajek 734236

Dr. Abdellah Zaidan 734235

Pills pharmacy 661912

Ferdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asmaa pharmacy 637053

Nairokhi pharmacy 622672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacob pharmacy 644945

Susseissi pharmacy 637660

IRRED: Dr. Radwan Al Saad (—)

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be rainy and winds will be southwesterly fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly fresh and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp. 30°/20°

Deserts 1/14

<p

Jordan Times

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Timely but flawed

THIS TIMING of the repeal of the 1953 law banning communism in Jordan and allowing for the prosecution of communist activists could not be more perfect. On the very day that the controversial legislation was rescinded, the death knell was also sounded for the Soviet Union, the prime bastion and birth place of communism. Thus, the removal of the law against communism coincided with the ending of any meaningful threat or challenge from the communist order and ideology. Nevertheless Jordan's choice to delete from its law books an archaic and possibly unconstitutional law was also a memorable occasion that deserves commemoration not so much for what it did but rather for what it suggests and implies, namely, that the democratisation process in the Kingdom is making great strides in form and substance.

The other bill passed Sunday by the Lower House of Parliament was the new Defence Law. The old 1935 Defence Law that the new law replaces was adopted before the establishment of the Kingdom. By all accounts and standards, the old Defence Law should have been repealed a long time ago. Yet there is something important lacking in the new legislation in the sense that it does not meet the requirements prescribed by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which Jordan ratified in 1977. Article 4 of that international instrument calls on member states to notify the U.N. secretary general of any declaration of martial law or state of emergency in order for him to notify the rest of the states parties to the covenant of the country's decision. The covenant also calls on countries to notify the U.N. about the articles of the covenant that it wishes to derogate from for the purposes of maintaining law and order in an emergency situation. The new Defence Law of 1990 does not contain any such references and, therefore, it is in this context deficient in a serious manner. It would be relatively easy to rectify such serious omission by enacting an immediate amendment to the law for this purpose. Otherwise, the Kingdom would remain accountable before the relevant U.N. body for such important flaw.

It appears also that our legal experts are not sufficiently cognizant of the country's treaty obligations. National legislations are often adopted without due attention to the various conventions that the government has signed and ratified. As such international commitments supersede national laws, with the exception of the Constitution, it would be prudent to keep in focus such treaty obligations when the country articulates its legislation.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Monday attacked as shameful the behaviour and practices of the leaders of the Arab Gulf states and described a summit they are holding as paving the ground for yet another shameful act against the Arab countries. The Gulf leaders, meeting in a tent which cost \$9 million to erect, have chosen to isolate themselves from the rest of the Arab Nation and to sell themselves to the colonialist Western nations, said the paper. Despite all attempts on the part of Saudi Arabia to lessen the degree of hostility and hatred harboured by the Gulf states, except for Oman, towards the other Arab countries, these states continue to act with hostility towards the Arab World, the paper said. It said that the leaders of these states are propagating the idea among their peoples that Arabism is a racist movement after they had given their blessings to a U.N. General Assembly decision to cancel a 1975 resolution that equated Zionism with racism. These leaders, said the paper, are presenting themselves as victors in the Gulf war against Iraq, whose people were victim of an American-led aggression, and boasting to be the sole beneficiaries of the aggression on a sister Arab state which continues to suffer from starvation, sickness and deprivation. With their summit in Kuwait and their current behaviour, the Gulf states' leaders are trying to escape from their shameful act of offering Arab wealth as a gift to the aggressors. The paper said that the consequence of this summit in Kuwait can by no means brighten the image of those who have sold out their nation.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily urged the Kuwaiti authorities and Kuwaiti people to refrain from further mal-practices against the Jordanian-Palestinian community still living in the emirate. Referring to the current campaign to evict the remainder of this community from the emirate, Badr Abdul Haq, said that the Jordanian and Palestinian citizens should be offered thanks for their long and noble service to the emirate and not a hostile action from people they have lived with for decades. Writing in Al Ra'i daily, the writer said that more than a year has elapsed after the Gulf war, but the Kuwaitis are singling out the Palestinians and the Jordanians out of all the other nationalities in Kuwait, to vent for their hatred and mistreat these unfortunate people who happened to be caught up against their will in a very dangerous situation that witnessed the occupation of Kuwait and the subsequent Western aggression on Iraq, the writer pointed out. He said that the Kuwaitis are finding in the Gulf summit meeting a pretext to drive out whatever remained of the Jordanians and Palestinians who committed no crime and who had never tried over the past decades to cause trouble or destabilise the security of the emirate as they are being accused at present. The writer said the Kuwaitis should offer the Jordanians and Palestinians their rights and compensations with a word of thanks rather than treating them in a shameful manner.

The View from Fourth Circle

Ghosts, failure and the gates of hell

By Rami G. Khouri

ABOUT two months ago, I wrote that we should not expect anything substantial to occur during the first several months of the peace process that was launched in Madrid at the end of October. Here we are at the end of December, and nothing very substantial has happened yet. I would simply add today that the peace talks probably will not make progress on substantive issues for at least another two months, perhaps by late February, for very good reasons related to the complex concept of human honour.

The fact is, all the key players in the peace process except for Moscow are participating with much reluctance, because they will have to relinquish or admit things that they would rather neither relinquish nor admit. Moscow's case is relatively simple because it is the first instance in modern history of a ghost sponsoring an international diplomatic process — a nice, friendly, lovable ghost, but a ghost nevertheless. The ghost can only win by being invited to the party, and will big by being asked to co-host the jamboree.

The Israelis have to relinquish one thing (lands they occupied in 1967), and admit two things (that the Palestinians exist and have national rights, and that the idea that God gave the land of Palestine to form a Greater Israel is emotionally compelling to Jews but politically fantastic to the rest of the world). All the Arabs have to admit one thing (Israel exists and must be recognised and accepted as a legal state in this region), and give up one thing (the expectation that the justice of our position is sufficient to bring us back our rights and lands, without our having to engage in a painful diplomatic process to retrieve them).

The Americans will have to relinquish much extra money for Israel, but that's nothing new, and will have to admit one thing (that their imbalanced support for Israel for many decades has been a key factor in perpetuating the Arab-Israeli conflict, and has to be modified into a more even-handed policy).

In other words, everybody will have to admit they were once mistaken, and will now have to compromise to atone for the wrongs of the past. This is never an easy thing to do, but is essential if peace and justice are to prevail. The point about the stalemate since Oct. 30 is that, a) nobody wants to make the first move to admitting their own past errors by b) making a gesture of compromise to the enemy, because c) this will force them to swallow their pride and accept the contentions of the enemy. This tactic of maintaining rigid, hardline positions is totally normal at this stage of the process, and we should not let it bother us. With such obstinate protagonists, the stalemate can only be broken if one side collapses (unilaterally), or the third party mediator/sponsor steps in and forces the issue (likely, but not certain).

I would suspect that at the next round of talks, the sponsors (Baker, Ghost & Co.) will go through the motions of playing the mediator's role, but will still evade the gut issues of land, withdrawal, and recognition, i.e. they will not want to get into the admitting or relinquishing business, and will not prod their party guests to do anything of the sort — yet. The United States is now paying the price for its many decades of partiality and heavy-handedness in the Middle East — and Mr. Baker's Catalyst Fantastic Show ("golly jee whiz folks, we're just a bunch of friendly old cow pokes here to lend helping hand if you all need a little friendly nudge, y'all understand what I mean?") simply will not eliminate the impact of several decades of official American steps in and forces the issue (likely, but not certain).

A Middle East that continues the trends of the past few decades will surely explode again into anger and warfare. Like the burning of Kuwait in 1991, this will see other Arab countries set ablaze — perhaps by their own people, perhaps by angry neighbours from the same house of Arabism, or perhaps by hungry, unemployed,

bias and shortsightedness.

The minute the United States gets off the fence and leans on Israel to accept the principle of exchanging land for peace (as it has started to do with the \$10 billion loan guarantees delay), the Israelis harden up (as they did in Madrid and Washington). If the United States pushes harder, the Israelis will try to fight back through their powerful American electoral interests. In an election year when Mr. Bush is having serious short-term problems, the price of confronting Israel may be too high for him in domestic electoral terms. The result is either a total breakdown of the peace process, or a false peace rammed down the throat of a weak Arab World, and destined to collapse, Vietnam-style, within months or years. In either case, the outcome is not hopeful.

This brings up the big question that has always loomed large in my book: what happens if the peace talks fail, if the sponsors do not intervene, if the protagonists remain deadlocked, and if the whole process collapses in late 1992?

This is still a strong possibility. It raises a vision of the future that all of us in the Holy Land would like to avoid. But we cannot avoid it, because like the waste and the suffering of the past, it stalks us and haunts us. It is a vision of perpetual conflict, ever more violent warfare, and an increasingly unstable and fractured region deep in the grips of fear, hatred, anger, fanaticism, desperation, and death.

We should be clear about the stakes at hand in the peace talks. If Baker, Ghost & Co. throw up their hands in despair, the process fails, and the Arabs and Israelis return home for good, our region is certain to continue down the road it has travelled since the 1950s. The Arab Nation will continue to struggle for its identity and its soul. The Arab people will perpetually battle the iron grips of autocratic regimes and oligarchic interests that seek to maintain a false stability by entering into mercantile alliances with imperial powers in the West. Some particularly grotesque Arab regimes will seek protection by renting armies from the West, while the more sensible Arab people at grassroots level will seek dignity by drawing strength from their own culture and humanity.

The affront that Israel represents to the Arab and Muslim people will continue to bound the conscience of those in the realms of Arabism and Islam who have grown weary of the struggle, and who have settled instead for the solace of air conditioners, the joys of potato chips, and the comfort of just enough cash at the end of every month to feed the family. The process of Arab defeat and subjugation will not dissipate into the warm evenings of the Orient or disappear into the mysterious recesses of the Oriental mind. Instead, it will whittle away at the remaining fragments of Arab self-respect, constantly chiding every new generation to dare anew to seek dignity and national self-assertion, to assure itself enough food to feed its entire nation.

A Middle East that continues the trends of the past few decades will surely explode again into anger and warfare. Like the burning of Kuwait in 1991, this will see other Arab countries set ablaze — perhaps by their own people, perhaps by angry neighbours from the same house of Arabism, or perhaps by hungry, unemployed,

frantic members of the same Islamic-Christian family who have neither enough food for their children nor water for their bodies. They will be offered air conditioners and potato chips, and they will burn them both, for such commodities mean little to dying societies oscillating between desperation and death.

We are in the uncomfortable situation of negotiating with little power other than the morality and justice of our case (a currency that means little to ghosts and those who associate with them) or the threat that our people will erupt into a great frenzy of despair at some point in the future, when they run out of patience, lies, tricks, food, and water.

The cost of failure is almost unimaginable, but still possible. It is a cost that will be deemed acceptable by the West, because the Arabs have little strategic value left in a world in which cowboys battle ghosts. It may also be acceptable to Israel, which feels Crusader-like, that it can isolate itself from its neighbours, protected by castles, nuclear bombs, and foreign sources of income. Some Arabs and Muslims, for their part, may decide that they, too, can distance themselves from the madness of their Semitic cousins, perhaps by living permanently in five-star hotels in chic international resorts.

In fact, though, these visions of escape are just that — mere hollow visions — because it will not be easy to escape the fury of several hundred million Arabs who are relegated to chronic poverty, autocracy, humiliation, and rage. This, in the end, is the vision that haunts us: a future as flawed as our recent past, a world ruled by political injustice and material inequity, the birthplace of the three great monotheistic religions rendered into a grotesque battlefield of messianic armies, a veritable killing field where the sword is held by those who kill in the name of their own God.

We have already had a glimpse of this ugly future, in the violence of the Israeli right, of the butchery conducted in several Arab countries by public and private armies that claim allegiance to assorted Christian or Muslim groups. Our land has been soiled by hijackers, terrorists, and hostage-takers. Our heritage has been demeaned by the highest rate of military spending in the entire world juxtaposed against the lowest rate of genuine stability in the entire world. Our future has been placed in bondage to great unknowns: can we escape from the current cycle of defeat, stalemate, and violence?

The current political-economic order in the region will not long sustain itself if existing problems are not resolved to the satisfaction of the majority of the people of this region. The Arab-Israeli conflict is a key determinant of the current state of fragmentation, violence, and regression, and will remain so if it is not resolved in a just manner. Either we move forward to justice, peace, coexistence, and stability for all, or we move forward to more of the violence of the past — a past that destroyed Crusaders and many other foreign imperial intruders, and that mercilessly burned those of the region, whether Christians, Muslims or Jews, who feigned legitimacy by seeking to live in small fortress states isolated from their natural surroundings.

This is what is at stake in the peace talks. We should always be aware of it, because it is a reality that we may have to deal with one day. As we negotiate in good faith, we should aim for the best, but always be prepared for the worst. The option of failure is not a weekend in Aqaba. It is a rendezvous with the gates of hell.

Silwan settlers — part of long tradition of takeovers in Jerusalem

By Robert Mahoney
Reuter

JERUSALEM — Across the roofs of the covered markets in Jerusalem's Muslim quarter, militant Israeli settlers are spreading out from the Jewish quarter — latest encroachment in what Palestinians call the creeping "Judaisation" of Arab East Jerusalem.

The skyline that embraces the Christian church of the Holy Sepulchre on Golgotha Hill and the great Muslim shrine, the golden dome of the Rock Mosque, is now dotted with Israeli flags.

They mark houses taken over by settlers with the blessing and protection of the most hardline government in modern Israeli history.

Palestinians say groups of nationalists and messianic Jews, using a combination of financial inducement, harassment, and legal manoeuvres, have taken over at least 53 Arab houses and a large Christian hospice in East Jerusalem, which Israel captured from Jordan in 1967.

The settlers have now set their sights on the Arab village of Silwan outside the city walls, they add.

Maps showing buildings taken over by the authorities for security purposes or houses liable for seizure by the state under laws

governing absentee ownership are officially secret. But the settlers are familiar with their contents and are basing plans on them.

Israeli flags flying in Jerusalem's old city show a chain of Jewish settlement stretching along major thoroughfares to the western wall, Judaism's holiest site.

The pattern of Jewish settlement in the old city fits into a bigger scheme within the municipality of Jerusalem, which in turn slots into a wider West Bank area.

Maps obtained by reporters show plans to build more than 200 housing units for Jews around the old city walls, more than 200 homes south of the walls in Silwan and more than 1,000 units worth of the old city, all in Arab areas.

Jerusalem's Mayor Teddy Kollek has denounced the plans as provocative.

During his 26 years in city hall Mr. Kollek was pursued a "mosaic" policy of keeping Jews out of potentially explosive Arab neighbourhoods. But he has surrounded such areas with huge Jewish housing projects.

Some 140,000 Jews now live over the pre-1967 border of the city, slowly encircling the estimated 150,000 Arabs in East Jerusalem and cutting them off

from their natural hinterland of the West Bank. About 350,000 Israelis live in West Jerusalem. Jerusalem claims the entire city of Jerusalem as its capital, but this is not recognised internationally.

Even if he wanted to, Mr. Kollek would be virtually powerless to stop the drive by hawkish Housing Minister Ariel Sharon to place enough Jews in the West Bank and Jerusalem to make its return to Arabs under any U.S.-brokered Middle East peace accord extremely difficult.

Chains of budding settlements cut the Jerusalem region into quarters, from Ramallah in the north of Bethlehem in the south, from the Latrun region in the west to the hills overlooking Jericho in the east.

Mr. Sharon heads a special government committee, formed to absorb an influx of Soviet Jews, which can and does oversee the Jerusalem municipality. Palestinians and left-wing Israeli politicians say the trail of permission and funding for many recent settler takeovers can be traced back to Mr. Sharon, whose office routinely declines to discuss such matters.

So when the U.S. State Department issued a strong appeal to the government this month to rein in settlers in Silwan, Palestinians laughed.

One unearthed a speech by

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir in August 1988 which left no doubt about government plans.

"We must see to it that Jews settle in the old city and that this becomes part of our general settlement policy in the land of Israel and also that East Jerusalem is settled extensively by Jews," Mr. Shamir said.

Palestinian academics say government policy appears to be to maintain a Jew to Arab ratio of 7:1 in the Jerusalem area. Because the Arab birth rate is higher this can be achieved only by preventing Arabs from building in Jerusalem and moving them from the Muslim quarter, they say.

The Palestinians say the first goal is easily achieved by withholding municipal planning permission. The second requires at least a veneer of legality.

Palestinians say the law favours the settlers who use evidence of former Jewish ownership or tenancy of an Arab-occupied house to acquire it. Palestinians are forbidden by law to buy former Arab houses in the Jewish quarter of the old city and it is almost impossible for them to buy property in West Jerusalem as Jews won't sell to them.

The main settler groups use the law or pay huge sums to tenants to acquire properties, sometimes one room at a time.

Ministers have acknowledged channelling funds to one group which also raises money from the United States. Potential foreign investors are given a tour of the old city pointing out former Jewish houses.

Ateret Cohanim, an offshoot of the larger Gush Emunim (block of the faithful) group colonising the West Bank and Gaza Strip, already refers to the Muslim quarter as the old Jewish quarter.

"Everything we do is legal," said Yossi Baumol, of Ateret Cohanim. "What we are trying to do here is right an historical wrong. There was a Jewish majority here in 1914 under Turkish rule."

Jews left the old city in the 1920s, because overcrowding and repeated Arab rioting.

Settlers now say they are merely repossessing Jewish-owned property in the Muslim quarter. Palestinians and foreign academics dispute this.

British researcher Graham McNeill says Jewish occupancy, like that of their Arab neighbours, was generally based not on ownership but on the traditional system whereby the tenant of property buys the right of occupancy through paying key.

The settlers take advantage of the lack of land registration in the old city where residency had traditionally been the main proof of ownership.

Many properties have also been seized by the authorities for security reasons since 1967. Their number and location is a secret. Several rooms acquired this way were given to settlers this year after a Jew was stabbed nearby.

Ateret Cohanim, an offshoot of the larger Gush Emunim group colonising the West Bank and Gaza Strip, already refers to the Muslim quarter as the old Jewish quarter.

Even in contested cases the settlers just move in to "create facts on the ground." If the Arab tenants go to court, the case could take years, during which time settlers are often allowed to stay in the disputed property.

This is so with the most famous case, the Greek Orthodox owned Saint John's Hospice in the old city. The Greek patriarch challenged the Ateret Cohanim 1990 takeover of the 72-room complex and won an eviction order which the settlers challenged. While the case continues some 20 settlers have been allowed to stay in the hospice.

The settlers who took a house in Silwan in December bought a part of it from a tenant. Even though the owner did not sell it to them, the sale was viewed as legal and the settlers moved in.

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

BETHLEHEM, Occupied West Bank — The small crowd stood outside the metre-high wiremesh fence surrounding the Israeli police station. Inside, the gates, sitting in the back of a jeep, the three girls, with an edge of hysteria in their voices, pleaded their innocence with the soldiers.

"We were going to the store to buy yoghurt," they screamed.

The girls, aged between 15 and 18, had just been taken into custody. They were suspected of having put up political posters.

Though not related to any of the girls, the crowd outside, exemplifying the sense of family and cooperation that has come to characterize the Palestinian intifada, pleaded with the soldiers to allow the girls to go free.

The girls were soon taken from the back of the jeep into the police station. Word of their arrest was passed to their families. Parents, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters soon joined the vigil in the chilly, empty night.

An hour passed before another army jeep screeched to a halt in front of the gates. In the back, one could hear giggling. Two woman soldiers, looking out of place in their olive drab uniforms, were helped off the jeep and led into the police station. They had been brought in to strip search the detainees.

By this time, the parents were growing increasingly despondent. As the mothers continually uttered prayers, the fathers helplessly paced back and forth, stopping occasionally to look and listen to the soldiers' screaming and the girls' pleading.

Suddenly, two unshaven and

unkempt teenagers walked out from the honeycomb of alleyways that spill into the city square. They walked past the waiting crowd, to the edge of the wiremesh fence and stood there, away from the crowd. Soon, a soldier came out to meet them. After some initial whispering, the soldier started screaming at the teenagers as if they had committed some offence and pushed them into the police yard and the building.

"This is it," said a bystander. "Those dogs! Now we know (who turned the girls in)." The two teenagers, he was saying were most probably collaborators. Not being residents of Bethlehem, they had recently been seen around town.

"I am not afraid of the Jews," the bystander, a local reporter, said. "What can the Jews do to me? I am afraid of the Arabs. That is our problem."

Lucy, one of the girls

arrested, had been arrested and imprisoned previously for taking part in the intifada, said Hanna J. Nasser, deputy mayor of Bethlehem, interviewed the next day. Her two older brothers had also served time in prison. Lucy's father had died when she was young.

Economic strangulation — either through imposition of

fines or the suppression of the emergence of an economic infrastructure — is the main weapon used by the Israelis to silence the nationalistic tendencies of the Palestinians.

The story of Lucy and her friends, and most of all the 750 shekels fine, was soon known by most of the town, spread through the grapevine. Economic strangulation — the mes-

sage had been reinforced. "We hope that we reach our goal eventually and have our lands liberated," Mr. Nasser said. "We can't continue to live under occupation."

Freij rejects

(Continued from page 1) his community and Beit Sahur, a Christian town where tradition holds shepherds learned of the birth of Christ, would accept only directives from the uprising leaders and Hamas.

He added: "I want to say that the Palestinian leadership outside and inside support the opening of Bethlehem and adjoining Beit Sahur ... all the day."

He urged shops, restaurants and cafes to remain open and said people should "do their shopping."

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Hamas have been the main forces behind the four-year uprising.

The uprising has resulted in subdued Christmas holidays in Bethlehem in recent years, with shops and restaurants closed.

Beirut body

(Continued from page 1) held, and Mr. Picco is trying to obtain their release along with the remains of hostages who died in captivity.

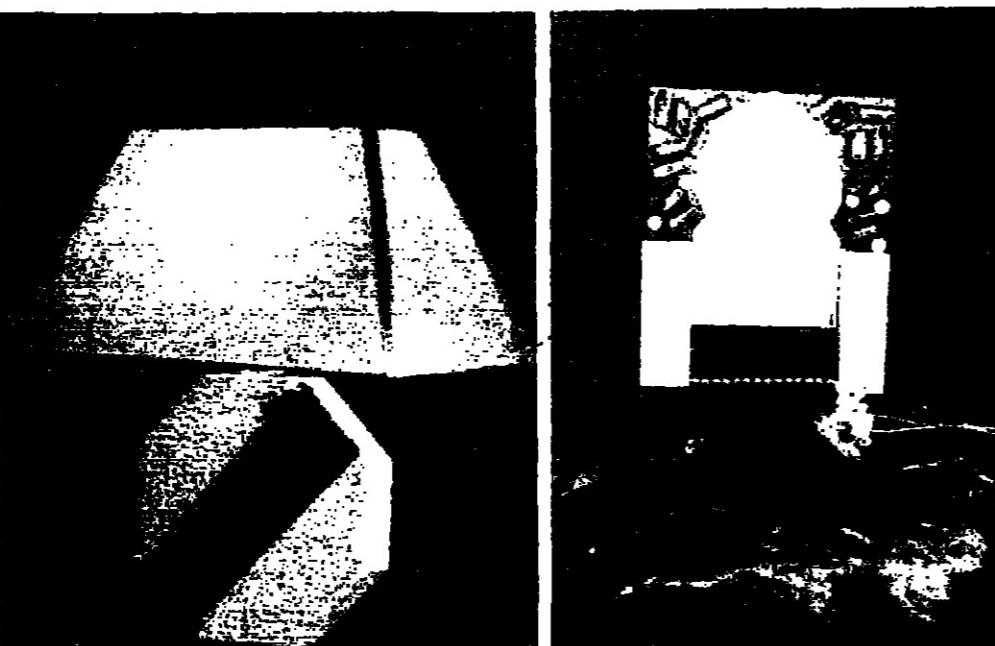
Col. Higgins was the last American to be kidnapped in Lebanon since the spate of abductions began in 1984. He also was the third American hostage to die.

Announcing his execution, his kidnappers released a 30-second videotape showing a man, purportedly Col. Higgins, hanging from a gallows. There was no way to determine when the video was made.

U.N. sources in Lebanon have said that although his death was announced in July 1989, they believed Col. Higgins died of torture in December 1988, after an escape attempt.

In addition to Col. Higgins, William Buckley, 57, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) station chief in Beirut and librarian Peter Kilburn, 61, have died in captivity.

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Real Madrid drops point, raise rivals' hopes

LONDON (R) — Real Madrid's colourless goalless draw against Real Oviedo has raised rivals' hopes that the Spanish Soccer Championship is not yet a foregone conclusion.

"The league is hotting up," ran the headline of a popular Spanish sporting paper as Atletico Madrid moved one point closer to the top of the table this weekend after their 1-0 win over Sporting Gijon. They now trail Real by six points.

Atletico trainer Luis Aragones believes the league is still wide open. "Madrid's advantage is important but you can't now talk about a league winner — that won't be decided until the end and then we'll see who the champions are."

"You can't win all the time," said Real Madrid striker Emilio Butragueno, who missed plenty of chances in his side's second consecutive draw after their irresistible run of form.

Real trainer Radomir Antic preferred to focus on progress so far. "This has been the best year of my sporting career," he said.

Barcelona, also back on track, slammed Cadiz 4-1 and heard Danish striker Michael Laudrup confirm he was staying for another season.

"I haven't found anything better than this club," he said.

Ace French marksman Jean-Pierre Papin had another successful weekend. On Saturday, he helped Marseille crush Caen 5-0.

Papin is almost sure to clinch his fourth consecutive title with champions Marseille, now four points clear of Monaco with a game in hand.

It will probably be his last season in France. Like many European soccer stars, Papin is

poised to join an Italian club. The 28-year-old striker said he had received offers from AC Milan, Napoli and Juventus.

Dutch first division leaders PSV Eindhoven go into the winter break with their unbeaten record intact.

PSV trainer and former England manager Bobby Robson gave a rare smile after his side's closing game of 1991 — they won 4-0 away to FC Twente Sunday. He even had the good humour to throw a couple of words of his seldom-heard Dutch into a post-match interview.

But rumours of his departure from Eindhoven at the end of the season will continue to swirl until his PSV contract is renegotiated next month.

EUROPEAN SOCCER

Thirteen wins and six draws have given his side 32 points. Only two points and a game in hand separate them from Feyenoord Rotterdam, who have mounted a concerted charge on the top of the table during the early winter months. The league resumes on Jan. 10.

Porto's goalkeeper Vitor Baia set a Portuguese record of 1,079 minutes without conceding a goal in the 0-0 draw at Boavista Sunday.

Baia surprised the 1,064-minute mark set by Benfica's Manuel Bento 10 years ago.

Champions Benfica, who beat Uniao da Madeira 1-0 away Saturday, regained top place.

Porto remained one point behind with a game in hand.

Benfica, reduced to 10 men in the 71st minute when Soviet striker Sergei Uran was sent off for a

foul, clinched the winner four minutes later. Antonio Pacheco scored from the penalty spot after Vitor Panceira was brought down by Brazilian defender Marco Aurelio.

An 87th minute goal by defender Jose Leal gave third-placed sporting a 2-1 home victory over Maritimo.

Maritimo captain Carlos Jorge was sent off in the first half for a bad tackle on Jorge Cadete.

Leeds United blew a chance to go back on top of the English soccer first division when they were held 0-0 at Nottingham Forest Sunday.

Manchester United, who have two games in hand after their home game with Aston Villa was postponed Saturday because of a waterlogged pitch, stayed ahead of Leeds on goal difference. Both have 44 points.

Leeds enjoyed more possession but failed to produce clear-cut opening, while Forest could have stolen the points if they had put away one of three good chances.

Manchester United face Leeds in a top-of-the-table clash at Elland Road next Saturday.

England captain Gary Lineker scored his first goal since coming back from a four-month break because of his baby son's illness to help Tottenham win 2-1 at Crystal Palace.

Lineker, English football's top scorer with 20 goals, scored in the 36th minute Paul Walsh had put Tottenham ahead 20 minutes earlier.

But Spurs struggled against a fierce wind after the break and Palace pulled a goal back when Tottenham's former England defender Terry Fenwick put the ball in his own net in the 62nd minute.

Bubka ready to compete for Ukraine

STOCKHOLM (AP) — Sergei Bubka has dominated world pole vaulting for the last decade while competing for the Soviet Union. Now he looks forward to representing his native Ukraine.

"Why not compete for Ukraine? I think it's the best solution," Bubka said in a telephone interview Sunday from his home town of Donetsk. "I don't understand why we must be one team of 11 countries."

Bubka was referring to the 11 former Soviet republics that formed the Commonwealth of Independent States Saturday in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan.

Ukraine earlier this week asked the International Olympic Committee to allow it to participate independently in the 1992 games, according to a news agency.

The request was made Thursday, the same day the Vice President of the Soviet Olympic Committee said Ukraine would compete on a unified Soviet team at the winter games that begin in Albertville, France, on Feb. 8.

An official request was sent from the Ukrainian parliament Thursday asking that Ukraine's National Olympic Committee be recognized as a full member of the IOC, the Ukrainian Informa-

tion Service said.

Bubka, who broke the world pole vault record four times indoors and four times outdoors this year, said he had not yet talked to the Ukrainian Olympic Committee.

"I don't have much information about an Ukrainian team. It's a difficult question. But we'll have a meeting in Kiev Tuesday. Then I'll meet our leaders. If Ukraine can't send its own team to the winter games, maybe it will happen for the summer games."

At least 15 countries, including Canada and Great Britain, had recognized Ukraine following the former Soviet republic's overwhelming vote on independence on Dec. 1. Ukrainian athletes have won 400 medals, including 177 golds, for the Soviet Union since 1952.

Bubka, who will defend his 1988 Olympic title in Barcelona in August, said the political turmoil in the former Soviet Union has created a tough situation for many athletes.

Gospot, the government agency that funded, controlled and pumped Communist ideology into generations of Soviet champion athletes, went out of business early this month.

"The economic situation is

very bad. Who will give money to the athletes? For me it's no problem, but it will be difficult for many other athletes," said Bubka, who has several endorsement contracts and gets big bonus money every time he sets a world record.

Bubka, who earlier this year signed a contract to compete for a track club in Berlin, has broken the world pole vault record 28 times — 15 indoors and 13 outdoors. That makes him one of the greatest record-breakers in track and field history.

His indoor record is 6.17 metres and he improved the outdoor mark to 6.10 (20-0) — becoming the first man to clear 20 feet outdoors — in Malmo, Sweden, a few weeks before winning the event at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo in August.

Bubka, 28, and Carl Lewis, the outstanding athletics athlete of the 1980s, will compete Feb. 5 in Stockholm's Globe Arena.

"I will probably be my season debut indoors although I may compete in a meet in France at the end of January," Bubka said.

"I'm training quite hard now. I've been jumping well in training, but I'm bothered by pain in my left leg. It's an old injury."

Papin has been repeating for weeks on French television in a slick advertisement selling disposable razors.

"I will never change because I will always remember that I used to earn 4,000 francs (\$730) a month," said Papin, whose mother works at a supermarket checkout.

Thanks to their inspirational scorer, Marseille established themselves as arguably the best side in Europe by eliminating formidable AC Milan of Italy in the European Cup in March.

"It was fantastic," Papin said.

"Nobody thought we could do it but we knew."

The dream ended in Bari in May with Marseille's European Cup final defeat on penalties by Red Star.

"I don't want to watch that match again," Papin said. "Our dream was spoilt, and the rest of the season with it."

But worse was still to come.

Before a league match at St. Etienne last month Papin was struck by a beer bottle as he got off the players' coach. St. Etienne doctors and club President Andre Laurent later accused him of having feigned injury.

"How could I do such a thing?" Papin said. "It was just disgusting. I couldn't stand it because it was my honesty that was put in doubt. Football will never mean the same to me."

Papin was struck by a beer bottle as he got off the players' coach.

He will be suspended for the rest of the season.

Osoro heads Kenyan athletics sweep

MOL, Belgium (R) — Ondoro Osoro led a Kenyan sweep of the first four places in a Grand Prix cross-country. Osoro, overall winner of last year's inaugural series, led virtually throughout. He finished 100 metres clear of World Championship bronze medalist Simon Karori. The pair staged a one-two triumph in the opening race of the series in Belbec, France, on Dec. 1. Francesco Panetta, running his first cross-country following a suspension by his Italian Federation, headed the European challenge in sixth place.

Four-times world champion John Ngugi of Kenya

also made it two in a row in the women's section after pulling

away from Belgian Veronique Collard 400 metres from the line.

Graf hires Guenthard as new coach

BRUEHL, Germany (AP) — Heinz Guenthard is the new coach of Steffi Graf, the No. 2 woman tennis player in the world, her father and manager Peter Graf announced. Guenthard, former Swiss Davis Cup coach, will travel with Graf to Australia after Christmas. Graf will join Boris Becker in the Hopman Cup in Perth and will then go to Melbourne for the Australian Open, Peter Graf said. Graf parted company with Czechoslovak coach Pavel Slozil in November, following a five-year partnership.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
© 1991 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ALL THE TRICKS

East-West vulnerable. East deals.

NORTH

♦ A 7 5 3 2

♦ A K

♦ A 10 9 5

* Void

WEST

EAST

♦ K Q 10 4

♦ J 9 7 5 4

♦ 7 6 4 2

♦ K J 7 4 3

+ ♦ A Q 6

SOUTH

* Void

♦ 8 6 2

♦ K Q J 8 3

* 10 9 8 5 2

The bidding:

East South West North

1 ♠ 2 ♠ 3 ♠ 4 NT

Pass 7 ♠ Pass Pass

Dbl. Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Seven of ♦

There are players who have never

bidding and made a grand slam, some

because of a reluctance to risk the

considerable bonus awarded a small

grand slam. Grand slams, however,

are not that uncommon, but to bid

and make a grand slam after your

opponents have opened the bidding

is a rare bird indeed.

South's two diamonds was a weak

jump overall. Similarly, this action is

taken with a six-card suit, but at

this vulnerability it is not unknown

for practitioners to take some liberties.

North thought it highly likely

PEANUTS

YES, MA'AM.. MY BINDER IS CAUGHT IN MY HAIR..

REALLY? THAT'S INTERESTING

NEVER IN ALL YOUR YEARS OF TEACHING, HUH?

© 1991 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

Andy Capp

HOW'S MY GOING, MIKE?

GREAT ANDY, BUT YOU CAN'T SEE MY LINING!

HE WORKS WITH A DEMOLITION CREW

© 1991 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

Mutt'n'Jeff

HERE, BOY! SOMETHING FOR YOU!

WHAT'S THIS? THAT'S A TIP FOR YOU!

WHY, A FIFTY-CENT TIP!

© 1991 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

A TIP?

YES, A FIFTY-CENT TIP!

WHAT'S THE MATTER? DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT A TIP IS, YOUNG MAN?

© 1991 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

OH, YEH, SURE! BUT ER — YOU'RE A LITTLE OLD-FASHIONED, AINT YOU? USING CHANGE?

WHAT'S THE MATTER? DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT A TIP IS, YOUNG MAN?

WHY, A TIP!

© 1991 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

All of dummy's spades were now

established.

Declarer crossed to the

table with a club ruff, cashed the ace

of trumps to draw the last trump

and the ace of spades to remove the

defenders' last card in that suit.

Dummy was left with nothing but

<p

Financial Markets		Jordanian			
		In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank			
		U.S. Dollar in International Markets			
Currency		Mon. 20/12/1991 Close	Tuesday 21/12/1991 Opening		
Sterling Pound*	1.6580	1.6622			
Deutsche Mark	1.5359	1.5290			
Swiss Franc	1.3642	1.3590			
French Franc	5.2499	5.2750			
Japanese Yen	127.53	127.55			
European Currency Unit	1.3225	1.3275			
* USD for STC ** European Opening at 2.000 A.M. GMT					
Bourse currency interest rates Date: 23/12/1991					
Currency	1 MTHS	3 MTHS	6 MTHS		
U.S. Dollar	4.75	4.25	4.12		
Sterling Pound	10.93	10.61	10.66		
Deutsche Mark	9.75	9.75	9.56		
Swiss Franc	8.50	8.57	8.57		
French Franc	10.06	10.06	9.95		
Japanese Yen	6.06	5.95	5.62		
European Currency Unit	10.66	10.62	10.50		
Interest rate for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.					
Precious Metals Date: 23/12/1991					
Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	558.35	6.80	Silver	3.87	0.084
* 21 Karat					
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 23/12/1991					
Currency	Bid	Offer			
U.S. Dollar	0.6760	0.6780			
Sterling Pound	1.2591	1.2654			
Deutsche Mark	0.4421	0.4445			
Swiss Franc	0.4975	0.5000			
French Franc	0.1294	0.1300			
Japanese Yen*	0.5503	0.5530			
Dutch Guilder	0.3916	0.3936			
Swedish Krona	0.1209	0.1215			
Italian Lira*	0.0583	0.0586			
Belgian Franc	0.02135	0.02146			
* Per 100 Other Currencies Date: 23/12/1991					
Currency	Bid	Offer			
Bahraini Dinar	1.7640	1.7720			
Lebanese Lira*	0.0765	0.0775			
Saudi Riyal	0.1799	0.1806			
Kuwaiti Dinar	--	--			
Qatari Riyal	0.1832	0.1840			
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2200			
Omani Riyal	1.7305	1.7390			
UAE Dirham	0.1832	0.1840			
Greek Drachma*	0.3735	0.3755			
Cypriot Pound	1.5260	1.5390			
* Per 100 CDS Indices for Amman Financial Markets:					
Index	21/12/1991 Close	22/12/1991 Close			
All-Share	130.18	129.61			
Banking Sector	107.39	106.67			
Insurance Sector	128.45	128.64			
Industry Sector	164.03	163.63			
Services Sector	145.86	145.34			
December 31, 1990 = 100					

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One, Sterling	1.8710/20	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1566/71	Canadian dollar
	1.5195/5205	Deutschmarks
	1.7115/25	Dutch guilders
	1.3523/33	Swiss francs
31.24/29	5.1900/2000	Belgian francs
1150/151	5.1900/2000	French francs
127.20/30	1.1566/71	Italian lire
5.5660/5760	1.1566/71	Japanese yen
6.0000/1000	1.1566/71	Swedish crowns
5.9250/9300	1.1566/71	Norwegian crowns
359.00/359.50	1.1566/71	Danish crowns
		U.S. dollars

COMMANDO SQUAD

Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Nabil Al Mashini Theatre Tel: 675571

Haret Abu Awad Family will resume its performances of ZAMAN AL SHAKLABEH "SOMERSALT TIME" on Thursday Jan. 2, 1992 Advance reservation needed HAPPY NEW YEAR

Tel: 677420

U.S. survey shows food, drink and tobacco industries leading in profits

NEW YORK (R) — Stockholders of food, beverage and tobacco companies earn returns on their investments that are almost twice the median for all industries, Forbes magazine said Sunday.

The financial magazine said companies such as Coca-Cola Co. and General Mills brought shareholders an average return of 20 per cent over the last five years, beating all other industries for the second year in a row.

Those companies showed a return on equity of 17 per cent for the latest 12 months, the report said.

The magazine ranked 1,180 American companies in 21 industries according to their five-year and 12-month average returns on equity.

The consumer nondurables in-

dustry — manufacturers of personal products such as razors, apparel and toys — was the runner-up, with a five-year average return on equity of 18 per cent.

The health industry, including pharmaceuticals companies and health care providers, placed third at 17.9 per cent. The sector was number one throughout the 1980s.

The study found the median 12-month return on shareholders' equity in all industries dropped to 9.9 per cent, compared with 12.1 per cent last year. It was the first time the figure had fallen below 10 per cent since 1972, the magazine said.

Ranked individually, Holly Corp., a small petroleum refining company based in Dallas, was the most profitable U.S.

company. Forbes noted that Holloman shareholders got an average return of 68.3 per cent over the last five years.

La Gear, last year's first-ranked company, slipped to fifth place after failing to make a profit in the latest 12-month period.

Some of the other profitable companies included Microsoft Corp., Nike Inc., Harley-Davidson and Philip Morris.

King World Productions ranked first in terms of efficiency, which Forbes based on profits and sales per employee and debt levels.

King World, which distributes Syndicated Television, earned almost as much as the ABC television network last year, with fewer than 500 employees on its payroll, according to the report.

Taiwan currency reserves hit record \$80 billion

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's foreign currency reserves, the world's largest, have soared to a new record of about \$80 billion and are still rising, central bank officials have said.

"They are climbing quite rapidly and could hit \$81 billion by the end of this year," one said.

The reserves, which stood at \$72.44 billion at the end of last year, are being swelled by Taiwan's huge trade surplus and earnings from interest.

Central bank intervention in fore-

ign countries and break out of the international isolation caused by its diplomatic rivalry with China.

Central bank officials said the reserves would continue to increase early next year but the pace could slow because of an expected rise in imports to fuel the economic development plan.

Privately, they also say the size of the reserves is helping Taiwan gain more recognition from fore-

Hanoi gives Vietnamese wider work opportunities

HANOI (R) — Vietnam, in an effort to cope with unemployment and earn more hard currency, has issued its first government regulation allowing workers to negotiate their own overseas labour contracts.

The regulation said workers could seek jobs abroad as individuals or in work teams, could transfer earnings home and would not pay more than 30 per cent of their salaries as state tax, the Vietnam News Agency (VNA) has said.

"According to official figures, nearly six per cent of Vietnam's 40-million strong labour force is unemployed. But some Western economists estimate urban unemployment at 20 per cent.

BOMBAY — A bullish wave swept the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) ahead of the end of calendar 1991. The BSE index leapt 41.84 points, or 2.24 per cent, to 1,915.12.

FRANKFURT — Share prices gently drifted to another lower close before a three-day holiday break. The 30-Share Dax Index finished 3.7 points lower at 1,539.62 after meandering in a five-point range.

ZURICH — Shares closed steady to slightly lower in very thin pre-holiday trading. The All-Share Swiss Performance Index shed one point to close at 1,015.6.

PARIS — A rise in French official interest rates, although widely expected, dragged the bourse to its lowest close in more than 10 months in quiet, pre-holiday trade. The CAC-40 Index fell 14.93 points, or 0.91 per cent, to 1,633.7.

LONDON — The market shrugged off alarm that the Bank of England might boost interest rates to cut sharp early losses and close just a bit lower. The 100-share FTSE Index, extending a recent slump, finished 12.7 points lower at 2,345.4.

NEW YORK — U.S. blue chips rose to new session highs in late morning trading after positive sentiment over the Federal Reserve's interest rate cut wiped out early losses. The Dow Jones average was up 9.84 points at 11.55 a.m. (1655 GMT).

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BOMBAJ — A rise in French official interest rates

Gorbachev doubts new commonwealth can survive

ROME (Agencies) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said in an interview broadcast Monday he did not believe the new Commonwealth of Independent States formed by nearly all the Soviet republics would survive.

Interviewed by Italian radio, Mr. Gorbachev also suggested he still controlled the Kremlin nuclear weapons button.

Mr. Gorbachev accused Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the driving force behind the new commonwealth, of being undemocratic and repeated calls for a final session of the Supreme Soviet to declare the Soviet Union dead.

Asked if he considered himself the head of the opposition to Mr. Yeltsin, he said:

"I don't believe in this new community. I believe it cannot survive. It will not manage to create the mechanisms of coordination. I think it will lack agreement and the normal functioning of institutions, which is what we need now."

But he said he would not lead active opposition to the commonwealth for fear that this could cause more harm.

Eleven Soviet republics formed the new Commonwealth of Independent States at a meeting in the Kazakh capital of Alma-Ata Saturday and told Gorbachev that the Soviet Union and his job no longer existed.

They postponed until Dec. 30 a decision on who will control the Soviet nuclear arsenal, appointing Soviet Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov temporary armed forces chief until that date, when republican leaders will meet to set up a permanent structure.

In the interview — taped Saturday —

day in the Kremlin while the Alma-Ata meeting was in progress — Mr. Gorbachev was asked: "Do you still have the briefcase with the button for the nuclear command?"

He answered: "In my briefcase there are many things that you should not know about. There are always things that it is better not to know. It is probable, however, that the atomic briefcase, which weighs a kilogram and a half, is still with me."

Referring to his opposition to the new commonwealth, Mr. Gorbachev said: "The greatest dangers are born of the divisions of the country and I, as president, must react."

"This is my political position and my conviction. But since the Supreme Soviets of the republics have decided to (go to their own way) I don't think that I should counterpose my convictions in this difficult situation, with the risk of definitely dividing society."

Mr. Gorbachev contested the republics' declaration that the Soviet Union was dead, saying only the now-defunct Supreme Soviet could make such a decision.

"It is not reasonable to think that someone arrives, and declares that the Supreme Soviet has been liquidated, the Kremlin and all its possessions are nationalized," he said.

"Death toll estimates varied, but Mirab Kvitsashvili, Georgia's deputy health minister, said at least 18 people had been killed and 140 wounded.

The embattled president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, was reported hiding Monday in the basement of the parliament building. Late Sunday, he rejected opposition calls for his resignation and an offer of safe passage out of Georgia.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, a former political dissident, has been his power base erode since May

ers, Mr. Gorbachev said: "For me, they have poisoned the air. They have humiliated me. I can be humiliated."

Mr. Gorbachev said the events leading to formation of the commonwealth were not a coup, as some people had suggested. But he said they were unconstitutional.

"I don't think this is a coup. I'm just saying that the process of transition has to follow the constitutional course. I told Mr. Yeltsin: 'If you are democrats, if you are authentic reformers you must always act according to the laws and rules, otherwise people will ask if you are nothing but street delinquents,'" Mr. Gorbachev said.

In a separate development, rebel troops seeking to oust a president they call dictatorial pummeled Georgia's parliament building with rocket and machine-gun fire Monday, stepping up a fierce power struggle in the Caucasus nation.

Georgia is the only former Soviet republic, apart from the Baltics, that has refused to join the new commonwealth. Fighting by forces vying for control of the republic broke out Sunday in Tbilisi, its capital.

Death toll estimates varied, but Mirab Kvitsashvili, Georgia's deputy health minister, said at least 18 people had been killed and 140 wounded.

In an apparent reference to Mr. Gorbachev's impending resignation, Mr. Portugalov said the two presidents were discussing "the time of the event that everyone is expecting."

Mr. Gorbachev has said that he would make a decision on his political future after receiving the documents from the commonwealth meeting in the Kazakhstan capital Alma-Ata.

Of Mr. Yeltsin and his follow-



Mikhail Gorbachev

when he won a landslide victory in Georgia's first direct presidential election. Critics accuse him of closing down newspapers, denying the opposition access to television and refusing to release political prisoners.

The state-run Georgian National Information Agency reported Monday that 50 people were hurt in the fighting but claimed the situation "was under the control of the president."

In Moscow Mr. Yeltsin met Monday with Mr. Gorbachev to discuss the transition of power after Saturday's formation of the commonwealth, said Nikolai Portugalov of Mr. Gorbachev's press office.

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Bonn recognises Croatia, Slovenia

BONN (R) — Germany formally recognised the breakaway Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Slovenia Monday, climaxing a campaign that has raised questions about Bonn's assertive role in European politics.

Germany came under heavy criticism from its EC partners for its determined drive to win support for Slovenia and Croatia, which declared independence from Yugoslavia last June.

Thousands of people have been killed since then in fighting in Croatia between Croatian forces and the republic's Serb minority, backed by Serbia and the Serbian-led federal army.

Germany will open diplomatic relations with the two republics on Jan. 15, the European Community's (EC) deadline for recognising all republics which live up to an EC good conduct list.

"In the view of the German government, the Republic of Slovenia and Croatia fulfil the conditions defined by the European Community," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Under the EC conditions — agreed in a compromise to preserve the facade of unity after long debates between Germany and more cautious members — the republics must pledge to uphold democracy, respect human and minority rights and renounce the use of force to change borders.

The Foreign Ministry said the

German consul-general in Ljubljana and Zagreb would deliver letters of recognition Monday from German President Richard von Weizsaecker.

Germany

also aroused concern that Germany — since unification last year by far the largest and most powerful EC state — was flexing its muscles and defending German interest after decades of restraint.

Germans have generally welcomed Chancellor Helmut Kohl's support for the two republics, which they see as upstanding Roman Catholic nations frustrated in their drive for freedom by Europe's last Communist strongmen, the Serbs.

But influential newspapers have begun to criticise Bonn for pushing ahead too quickly and angering neighbours who recalled that Nazi Germany was the strongest supporter of Croatia's fascist state during World War II.

"If Bonn isn't playing power politics, what is it doing?" The Munich daily *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* asked.

"The march of German foreign policy has ended for the time being in a no-man's land between hope and fear," the weekly *Die Zeit* commented.

COLUMN

Stolen jawbone of Saint Anthony returned to church

PADUA, Italy, (R) — A 13th-century Christian relic, the jawbone of orator-Saint Anthony, was returned to a church in the north Italian town of Padua Sunday, two months after being stolen by masked bandits. Police recovered the relic near Fiumicino Airport Friday, hours before it was apparently due to be flown out of the country. Three thieves took the relic in its gold-plated silver cup, inlaid with rubies and sapphires and worth around 10 million lire (\$50,000).

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policy has ended for the time being in a no-man's land between hope and fear," the weekly *Die Zeit* commented.

Traffic cops say it with flowers

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand Traffic Police, much maligned like their colleagues around the world, awarded carnations instead of tickets to motorists Monday as a way of thanking well-behaved drivers.

As a Christmas goodwill gesture, traffic officers stopped motorists and gave them a carnation. Senior Sergeant Paul Kennedy said: "Until we hear directly from the mouth of President Aristide that he has chosen Theodore and not Victor Benoit, we of the National Front for Change and Democracy consider Benoit to be Aristide's choice," Mr. Benoit himself said.

France relaxes christening rules

PARIS (R) — Antiquated French rules governing the naming parents may give to their children are to be relaxed to cater for off-beat modern tastes and the population's more cosmopolitan make-up, government officials said Saturday. Legislation in force since the 1789 revolution had allowed civil registrars to reject names not taken from the calendar of Catholic saints or historical figures. The new rules, approved by the cabinet and still to be debated in parliament, are intended to take account of the preferences of atheist families or families of foreign extraction. Parents will be allowed to use any name which is not judged to make the child an object of ridicule. Adults with embarrassing names will find it easier to change them.

The rules, drawn up by Junior Justice Minister Michel Sapin, also give children born out of wedlock the same rights of inheritance as legitimate children.

Natalie Cole's mother couldn't be happier

NEW YORK (AP) — Natalie Cole's mother couldn't be happier about her daughter's success with an album of Nat King Cole standards. She just doesn't want to hear it. "I'm very happy about what it's done for her career and for my husband's," Maria Cole says in this Sunday's USA Weekend magazine. "But still, I don't like to listen to (Natalie's versions). I just feel that everything belonged to him." Natalie's Unforgettable album, with 24 cuts of her late father's songs, hit No. 1 on billboard charts this year and has sold more than 3 million copies. Her mother's feelings about the album run so deep she broke down in the recording studio when her 41-year-old daughter recorded her "duet" with Nat King Cole on Unforgettable.

Party leaders at the state and national levels do little to disguise their contempt for Mr. Duke.

"We don't call state party officials and tell them to try to keep Duke off the ballot. They call us," said B. Jay Cooper, a Republican National Committee official.

"In those states where they have the option of keeping Duke off the ballot, we're not discouraging that," he said.

"We've taken our position on Duke and on racism and anti-Semitism. The man is just an ugly man. We're going to be consistent in our position against him," he added.

But Mr. Cooper said the party is following a different approach with Mr. Buchanan and isn't encouraging party leaders to exclude him from any ballots. He's off the ballot in South Dakota because "he just missed the deadline," Mr. Cooper said.

National party leaders stress that while they don't put Mr. Buchanan in the same category as Mr. Duke, they're not about to make his challenge to Mr. Bush any easier.

Aristide accepts choice of new premier

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Jean-Bertrand Aristide accepted the senate's choice of the Communist Party leader to be prime minister, breaking a deadlock in talks over Mr. Aristide's return to power, officials said Sunday.

But the camp of one candidate for the post disputed the claim, and the deposed president, Mr. Aristide, was not immediately available for comment.

Senate President Dejean Beuzeire said Communist Party leader Rene Theodore would head a new government that would prepare for Mr. Aristide's return. He gave no indication when that

might occur.

The announcement after two days of negotiations between Autogusto Ramirez Ocampo, envoy of power and encouraging mob violence during his seven months in office as Haiti's first democratically elected president.

Victor Benoit, a leader of a pro-Aristide coalition and possible choice for prime minister, said Mr. Aristide accepted to Mr. Theodore's selection.

"Until we hear directly from the mouth of President Aristide that he has chosen Theodore and not Victor Benoit, we of the National Front for Change and Democracy consider Benoit to be Aristide's choice," Mr. Benoit himself said.

Firebombs bring chaos to London

LONDON (R) — Suspected Irish guerrillas forced police to shut London's underground rail system on Monday, creating chaos for half a million rush hour commuters.

One incendiary bomb went off under a seat in a train at Harrow-On-The-Hill. Police said nobody was hurt and the network was partially reopened after three hours following searches.

The police did not immediately blame Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas who are fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile, for the IRA, the weekend carnage in Northern Ireland gave the worst possible message to the world — that the conflict in the British province is between Protestants and Catholics locked in sectarian warfare.

About one million people usually use the London underground railway — known as "the tube" — on working days, but officials said only about half that number had been expected to travel Monday. Many commuters have already begun Christmas shopping.

Five people died in a vicious tit-for-tat war between Protestants and renegade Republicans that appeared to herald a bloody Christmas of shootings of innocent civilians.

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) says it is fighting to oust Britain from the province and to

unite Ireland. It does not want to be dragged into sectarian revenge killings.

Quick to distance itself from the weekend shootings, it took the unusual step of issuing a detailed statement in Dublin disassociating itself from the bloodshed.

"In the last 72 hours, there has been a series of killings and attempted killings which serve no purpose other than to direct attention away from Britain's central role in this conflict," it said.

Renegade Republican splinter groups, which the IRA has urged several times to disband, were blamed for three of the killings — two customers shot in a Belfast bar and a teenage student killed trying to save his father from a gun attack.

Protestant extremists, who have already said they will not reciprocate if the IRA calls a Christmas ceasefire, retaliated by killing a Catholic married to a Protestant and spraying bullets round a pub full of Sunday drinkers.

Bush says 1991 was a year of mixed emotions

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush says "the agony of a very slow economy" has made 1991 a year of mixed emotions after victory in the Gulf war and the growth of democracy in Eastern Europe.

A

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